



State of Connecticut  
**Department of Rehabilitation Services**  
*Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program*

Testimony before the Public Health Committee  
Public Hearing  
February 25, 2019

**Proposed Bill No. 375 AN ACT CONCERNING NURSING HOME STAFFING LEVELS.**

Good morning Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Somers, Representative Petit and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Mairead Painter and I am the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. I thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is mandated by the Older Americans Act and Connecticut General Statutes Sections 17b-400 through 17b-406 to provide services to protect the health, safety, welfare and rights of the residents of long-term care facilities. As the State Ombudsman, it is my responsibility to facilitate public comment and represent the interests of residents in order to recommend changes to the laws, regulations, policies and actions which affect the resident's quality of life and care. On behalf of the 35,000 residents in Connecticut's skilled nursing facilities, residential care homes and managed residential communities, I would like to testify regarding proposed Bill No. 375 AN ACT CONCERNING NURSING HOME STAFFING LEVELS.

It is proposed that the general statutes be amended to require adequate reporting 1 of the number of nursing home staff in order to ensure the safety and 2 well-being of nursing home residents. The Ombudsman program is in support of resident and involved parties having accurate information regarding the staffing patterns in all nursing homes. I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the new system that has been put in place by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In late 2017, CMS began to collect and post a public use file containing Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) staffing data submitted by long term care facilities. The file includes the hours nursing staff are paid to work each day, for each facility. It was not working perfectly at first, but has made great strides and is much more reliable.

There are categories for nursing staff and it is broken down by director of nursing, registered nurses with administrative duties, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses with administrative duties, licensed practical nurses, certified nurse aides, medication aides, and nurse aides in training. The file also includes a facility's census for each day within the quarter as calculated using the minimum data set (MDS) submission.

The PBJ public use file is available at <https://data.cms.gov/>

I wanted to ensure that the committee had this information and that it is accessible to the public.

I thank the Committee for your time and attention. I look forward to working with you on an ongoing basis and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mairead Painter  
State Ombudsman  
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